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beyond. I wanted to cross the Sutlej, but was informed there was neither bridge nor ferry, but that after three months a ferry would be established. This was all false; for I afterwards met an officer at Nynee Tal who is employed in the survey, and who informed me that, on one occasion, he and his party had crossed the Sutlej by stealth over the iron bridge, but were obliged to return in consequence of the serious illness of a brother officer. I left the next day, according to agreement, and returned through the Niti Ghaut by the western hills, shooting on my way. I saw there the real pintailed grouse, feathered to the toes and with two long feathers in the tail, and secured some as specimens; I also picked up numerous fossils and shells. I had collected ferns along the hills from Simla to Niti, and found some—the *Asplenium alternans*—at Niti, at an elevation of 11,000 or 12,000 feet. I arrived at Niti, after a stay of one month in Thibet.

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3. *The Western Shores of Volcano Bay, Yesso.* By Commander C. S. FORBES, R.N., F.R.G.S.

THE author left Hakodadi on the 30th of August, 1865, for the purpose of exploring the western shores of Volcano Bay, the expedition consisting of three Europeans, one Chinese, and five Japanese, all well mounted. The ascent of the high mountainous land commenced at a distance of five miles from the town. It is a wild country of forest, uninhabited, except by a few charcoal-burners. The first village they reached on the shores of the bay was named Osarcibé; but the shores are studded with villages and hamlets inhabited by fishermen, who were then employed in gathering kelp, which is exported to China as an article of food: the fishermen are a vigorous and industrious race, and manage their boats with great dexterity. On Sept. 1, the party started in a boat for Cape Yesou, to examine the volcano of Ushiuruyama, the highest in the neighbourhood, namely, about 1900 feet. The Japanese Government has sulphur-works on the slopes of the mountain. The bottom of the crater was found to be about half a mile in width north to south, and three-quarters of a mile in length from east to west; steam was ascending in many places, and several geysers were roaring in different directions. Many of the hot-springs are intermittent; and none of them approximate to the perfection of form and eruption which characterises some of the larger geysers in Iceland. On Sept. 2, the party saw a settlement of Ainos, the aborigines of Yesso. They came out at once to welcome their visitors. Their mode of salutation is somewhat peculiar: they first rub their

hands together, then raise them slowly to the forehead, ending by stroking their long black beards. Though their stature is moderate, they are well and stongly built, and their physiognomy is decidedly good, approximating much more to the Caucasian than to the Mongolian type. Their complexion is fair, though sunburnt, and they have an exuberant development of hair on head and body. Were it not for their soft black eyes, they would have a decidedly savage appearance. The women tatoo their lips. Their huts were of the poorest Japanese style, with little or no furniture save cooking-utensils and implements for fishing and the chase. There was no attempt at cultivation in the vicinity. Their costume was a simple flowing robe of skin or cotton. The present number of the Aino population is scarcely 50,000; and they live for the most part in the interior of Yesso in societies of from ten to twenty families, governed by their own hereditary chiefs. After leaving the Ainos, the party traversed the great pumice waste, which extends for many miles round the eastern slopes of the volcano Komanartaki. The same evening they reached Sarawa; on the following day they followed the coast as far as Mori, and thence struck inland to Konomar, a tea-house on the shores of a lake on the southern side of Komanartaki, which mountain they ascended on the following day: this volcano was in eruption in 1855 and 1796. Returning to Hakodadi, Commander Forbes made, a few days afterwards, a second excursion along the shores of Volcano Bay, reaching Yamacoushinai, he saw the volcano of Endermo, with its four vents in a state of activity; and further, towards the interior, three other mountains which appeared to be volcanic; one of them is about 7000 feet high. The interior of Yesso is very little known even to the Japanese themselves.

Commander Forbes' paper will be printed in the *Journal*, vol. xxxvi.

The PRESIDENT stated that Commander Forbes had brought from Yesso the skull of an *Aino*, the aboriginal race of the island, which was understood to be the first specimen of the kind brought to England. There was now present an eminent comparative anatomist, Professor Huxley, who had particularly occupied himself with a comparison of the skulls of different branches of the human race. The Society would be most happy to hear his opinion as to the skull in question.

Professor HUXLEY said that in the few remarks he had to offer he should bear in mind that this was a Geographical Society, and not an Ethnological or Zoological Society. Commander Forbes had placed in his hands the skull of one of the inhabitants of the island. They were a people who had attracted the attention of ethnologists from the time of Desmoulins, who devoted a particular section of his work to an account of them, illustrated by figures copied from a Japanese work. All who had seen the Ainos, as they were called, had agreed in stating that they were a comparatively fair people,

with features unlike those of the adjacent tribes, whether Japanese or Chinese, and furthermore that they possessed the very remarkable peculiarity of being clothed from head to foot in a singularly strong felt of hair. This was a particularly remarkable circumstance, because the island of Yesso lay in the immediate vicinity of Eastern Asia which was inhabited by people, one of whose most notable distinctions was that they were, perhaps, less provided with hair upon the body than any other race in the world, although the hair upon their heads, as in the case of the Mongolians and Chinese, commonly attained a considerable length. He thought that upon that and upon some other grounds many persons were disposed to think that the accounts which had been given of the Ainos, or hairy people, were exaggerated, and that it would turn out upon further enquiry that they were a people closely allied to the Japanese and Mongolian populations of Eastern Asia. Under these circumstances, in the mind of every scientific ethnologist a particular interest attached to the careful examination of their skulls. He believed that the skull brought home by Commander Forbes was the first specimen of the kind that had reached Europe, and therefore he had examined it with very considerable interest, which was heightened by the fact that some two or three years ago he had the rare opportunity of examining and describing several Japanese skulls. If he stated first what kind of speculations those Japanese skulls awakened in his mind, the meeting would be able, perhaps, better to appreciate the particular interest which attached to the Aino skull. He had examined three Japanese skulls, the authenticity of which was well certified. The two most characteristic were unlike ordinary Chinese skulls, and were still more unlike Mongolian skulls of Eastern Asia. They were remarkably long skulls, a formation totally unlike those of the predominant Mongolic stocks of Eastern Asia and China; and they had many other characteristics so peculiar that, as he remarked at the time to the Ethnological Society, he could find no parallel to these Japanese crania anywhere nearer Japan than the northern coasts of North America, and the eastern parts of northern Asia, where we meet with the Esquimaux, a people distinguished by the length of their skulls, and the Tchuktchi, who are said to resemble them. Perhaps the Tunguses must be included in the same category. Neither in Central Eastern Asia nor Siam were there found any skulls similar to these. If, again, we turned to Western America, we found no similarity in cranial formation. The people there were broad-headed; and thus to find a parallel we were confined to certain American and Asiatic tribes, who inhabited the region immediately surrounding the Arctic Circle. The long line of the Aleutian Islands, as far as we know, is peopled by a Mongolian race, whose skulls are as unlike these long skulls as anything could be. It was known that the Ainos were at one time much more numerous than they are at present, and that they inhabited a large part of the island of Nippon. The entire extirpation of the aboriginal inhabitants of a country by invaders was an excessively rare thing, and there was every reason to believe that the encroaching Japanese population, as it subjugated, became mixed with, the Aino population. Thus no doubt a very large proportion of Aino blood became mixed with that of the proper Japanese population. Whether this were so, or whether it were not, it was at any rate a remarkable fact that this particular Aino skull was one which exaggerated the Japanese type. It was a long skull, unlike that of all the adjacent peoples of Asia, except perhaps the Tunguses; and it formed a sort of intermediate link between the Chinese skull and the remarkably elongated skull of the Esquimaux. Thus it appeared possible, supposing—which he assumed for the present, having no better evidence—that this particular Aino skull was a type of all Aino skulls, that the feature which differentiated the Japanese from the majority of the nations which lie to the west and south of them might be derived from their

admixture with the Ainos. Where the Ainos themselves came from, and what were their relations to other people would be a very large question, into which he could not for one moment attempt to enter at present. He had made these remarks simply with the object of pointing out to the Society how very much we were indebted to Commander Forbes, who had at great personal expense and trouble procured this valuable relic.

The PRESIDENT said that the meeting would be much interested to hear from Commander Forbes whether there were any historic records of former volcanic eruptions in Yesso, and if he had any information as to the extent to which in ancient times the Japanese had communication with the outer world.

Commander FORBES stated that our information regarding events in Japanese history would soon be much extended, as Europeans have lately had access to books and manuscripts which will throw great light on the subject. In the Japanese Archipelago there are at least twenty-seven active volcanoes, but in Yesso only eight are known to the Japanese themselves, five of which are in Yesso, and four on the islands near its shores. Nothing could be known of the eruptions on this island prior to the fourteenth century, at which date its occupation was first accomplished by the Japanese; but concerning the volcanic history of Nippon, Sikok, and Kiusiu, we may expect to have the most exact information, as the Japanese annals have been kept with great minuteness; the history of Fusi-yama, for instance, is recorded for the last 2051 years. With regard to the intercourse of the Japanese with the outer world we have abundant proofs of this nation being the Norsemen of the far east prior to the year 1638, when they were forbidden by law to leave their country and the rig of the junks restricted to one mast and sail. Before that time they roamed over the whole eastern shores of Asia and the adjacent islands, and were renowned throughout the neighbouring countries, not only for their maraudings, but for their administrative capacity. In the fifteenth century Japanese traded to Acapulco in Mexico, and many of them established themselves there in the time of the Spaniards. However extraordinary the statement might seem, he had no doubt that the MSS. recently obtained in Japan by his friend the Rev. Mr. Brown, an American missionary, would tend to prove the fact that the Chinese and Japanese visited Mexico centuries before the time of Columbus. Within the last few years, a Chinese book has been found and translated, which was written in A.D. 499, giving an account of the travels of five Buddhist priests, who in A.D. 458 visited Mexico, by them termed Fou-sang, and gave a minute account of the country and its inhabitants. His own experience in Mexico and other parts of America led him irresistibly to the belief that the Aztec and Inca civilizations were imported from Eastern Asia. Concerning the Japanese, this much has come to light,—that, at a very early date, they explored the shores of Kamschatka and the north-western shores of America. Between the shores of Japan and Vancouver's Island there is an ocean current running at the rate of thirty miles a day, whilst in the Pacific there is a fair trade wind for a return voyage to the west. It is not long since that a Japanese junk was carried across the Pacific by this current, and three survivors of its original crew landed at the mouth of the Columbia River and were sent back to Japan. Whether his surmises relative to Japanese civilization in America were correct or not, the old spirit of enterprise in the Japanese is reviving, and their Government will be forced to rescind the law which forbids its people and their vessels to leave the country. Already one Japanese prince has abandoned the antiquated junk and has seventeen steamers employed in the trade of his province, in none of which, since the day they passed into his hands, has a single European been employed on board, Japanese engineers and Japanese sailors being found thoroughly competent to work them.

SIR GEORGE BACK said that he perfectly well remembered the drifting of the junk referred to, on the shores of Western America near the mouth of the Columbia River, while he was on one of his expeditions to Arctic America. He communicated the fact to his Majesty William IV. in the autumn of 1835.

## ADDITIONAL NOTICE.

(Printed by order of Council.)

### *On the Site of Ophir.*

[THE following extract from the 'Cape and Natal News,' of August 2nd, 1865, relating to an alleged discovery in Southern Africa, was published in a recent No. of 'Notes and Queries,' by Mr. George Thompson, who believes it probable that the ruins described mark the site of Ophir.]

"We have heard that the Rev. J. L. Dohne, near Durban, has been informed by a German missionary of the discovery of the ruins of ancient cities on the southern part of Africa; and we presume the following account, from the 'Eastern Province Herald,' relates to them:—

"Some time ago, a party of travellers, some of whom were connected with the Berlin mission, went on a tour of exploration in the country between the Limpopo and the Zambezi; and here is what they report:—The country from where we started on our tour of discovery is situated in the Leydenbur district, the free territories of the Bafedis (a Basuto chief) chief Sekukune, the son of Sekwaei, where there has been a mission station since the year 1864. We started on our expedition with 10 trustworthy and well-armed Bafedis, and 5 carriers for our little luggage, and took our route north-east to the Limpopo river; two 'Knoapnenzen' served us as conductors to take us to the ruins of Bunjaai,—of which we had heard long ago from some eye-witnesses, who were willing, but only required the permission of their chief Serabane, who was on friendly terms with the natives living near the ruins. Serabane at first positively refused, as he said it would cost his and our lives if he should take us to the ruins, but at last he agreed to let us and his people go there, but on our own risk. One of the conductors had been born and brought up in the neighbourhood of the ruins, and only latterly went to Serabane. On our journey we heard some very interesting particulars about them. They were continually frightened to take us any further, but at last agreed to take us to the neighbourhood of the ruins, and then leave us to our own fate to find our own way. Why Serabane should refuse and his own people be so frightened, I am at a loss to report; at any rate the Bunjaai must be a sacred place, as it is forbidden by punishment of death to take any white man there, kill any game, or even damage any of the trees or shrubs there. Respecting the ruins themselves so much is certain, that there are two places on which Egyptian ruins are standing. The smaller place is situated south of the Limpopo, called Bembe there. There even have been waterworks—the water flowing out of an animal's head cut out of stone. Many stories are connected with this holy place; but more important is the real Bunjaai, situated on the Salis River. This town must have been 'several hours' in circumference. There are one or more pyramids, also Sphinxes, parts of grand buildings, as well as many marble tables full of hieroglyphics, and for the history of Africa certainly very valu-